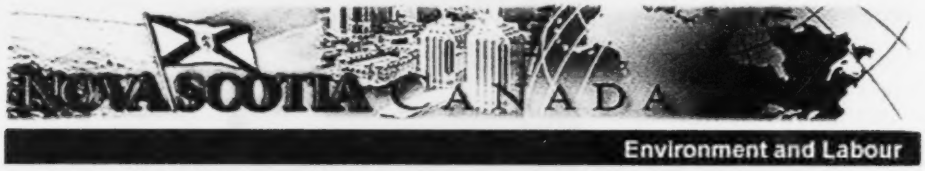

Nova Scotia Department of the Environment
1999/2000 Business Plan

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1.0 An Introduction to the Department of the Environment

The Nova Scotia Department of the Environment was established in 1973 by the Environmental Protection Act, which was designed to promote and protect the environment. By creating an environment department, the Government of Nova Scotia recognized that the social and economic well being of present and future generations is dependent on sustainable management of the air, water and land resources.

Since 1973, the role of the Department has evolved significantly. Initially, the Department managed pollution primarily through command-and-control models. While the Department remains predominantly a regulatory agency, it has improved its ability to protect the environment through complementary means. Backed by newer, more innovative legislation and supporting programs, the Department now actively enhances public participation in decision making; supports industry and community stewardship programs; reshapes programs to prevent pollution from occurring; and, facilitates the creation of jobs in the environmental sector.

Currently, the Department employs 235 staff who deliver programs through a decentralized office structure. There are 146 regional staff, who provide direct service delivery from 15 district offices in 4 regions. These regional offices are supported by 89 head office staff who initiate program planning and development, establish standards, track environmental trends, and facilitate job creation in the environmental sector. Both regional office and head office staff serve a broad client base that includes the general public, community groups, and industry.

Since the Department's inception in 1973, Nova Scotians have seen significant environmental improvements; however, significant challenges remain. Over the past five years, the Department has

prepared an annual business plan to identify, and make public, specific commitments to address the remaining challenges. As indicated in this year's plan, NSDOE's priorities for 1999/2000 demonstrate a commitment to sustainable development through its focus on environmental quality, improved access to public information, industry and community stewardship, customer service, and increased opportunities for employment in the environmental sector.

Specific highlights of the business plan include:

- achieving 50% solid waste diversion by the end of 2000;
- implementing a wastewater strategy;
- releasing the second State of the Environment report;
- facilitating the creation of jobs in the environmental sector, as well as youth employment opportunities.

Budget Allocation for Major Program Areas
The Department's total budget is $15,678,000, as outlined in the following table. Because the majority of client contact is through the regional offices, over 60% of the budget supports regional office responsibilities. These responsibilities include: evaluating approval applications, monitoring regulatory activities, conducting industrial inspections, enforcing regulations, and supporting industry and community stewardship.

In 1998/99, there were two major changes in departmental responsibilities. First, the Department gained responsibility for the Protected Areas program. As a consequence of this change in responsibility, the Department of Natural Resources transferred to NSDOE the 10 staff who administer the Protected Areas program. Second, responsibility for the Emergency Measures Organization and E-911 was transferred from the Minister of the Environment to the Minister of Natural Resources.

1999/2000 Budget Allocation

Functional Area	Allocation ('000)
Regional Offices (approvals, enforcement, monitoring, water utilities)	8,968
Environmental Management, Protection and Support Services (standards development, research environmental trends, policy and program development, education, technical expertise, media)	5,098
Protected Areas (protection of natural areas)	770
Environmental Industries and Technologies (develop and market environmental technologies)	842

Total	**15,678**

Major Challenges
Although the Department has broad responsibilities for managing and protecting the environment, it recognizes that it must work hand-in-hand with industry and community organizations to achieve results. For example, eliminating the threats to recreational areas so that they may be re-opened to swimming and shellfish harvesting requires industry, community, and government stewardship of the water resource.

Sharing responsibility for resource stewardship presents the Department with several challenges that, if left unaddressed, could impede progress. These challenges include: increasing environmental awareness, resolving resource conflicts, and facilitating public participation in decision making.

- **increasing environmental awareness:** Taking good care of the environment is everyone's responsibility. However, unless Nova Scotians understand the significant environmental challenges we all face, and know how to participate in solutions to these challenges, progress will be impeded. As one example, the Department, in partnership with the Resource Recovery Fund, must address the ongoing need to encourage everyone to participate in recycling and composting programs which provide for a clean environment.

- **resolving resource conflicts**: Resource use conflicts can arise among users of shared environmental resources. Recognizing this, the Department seeks new and innovative methods to resolve conflicts among stakeholders.

- **facilitating public participation**: As more and more community and industry stewardship agreements are developed, the Department must make available adequate support and technical assistance to support effective public participation in planning and decision making. While forging working relationships with industry and communities is not new, the Department is challenged with the ongoing need to re-design service delivery to support changing client needs.

2.0 Mission Statement
In 1995, the Department established a planning team, representing all staff levels and functional areas. This team was tasked with developing a vision for the Department, taking into consideration staff and client comments. The resulting mission statement reflects the responsibility of the Department to protect the Province's environment, to effectively manage the environment, and to ensure compliance with environmental legislation and regulations.

> *" The Mission of the Nova Scotia Department of the Environment is to protect, manage, and promote a healthy environment."*

3.0 Strategic Goals
Along with the mission statement, the Department's strategic planning team developed four (4) strategic goals. These strategic goals support

the government-wide goals of social responsibility, responsive government, fiscal responsibility and economic growth, in the following way:

Strategic Goals

Departmental Goal	Definition	Recent Activities
Government- Wide Goal: Responsive Government		
Departmental Goal #1 Improve the Department's ability to protect the environment through enforcement of its legislation and complementary activities relating to staff training, teamwork, application of appropriate technology, and education and public participation.	address legislative and regulatory requirements while meeting changing public needs and recognizing the evolving business climate	• staff training, including investigation and enforcement techniques, and OH&S requirements • review the Environment Act in 1999/2000 to better serve the public and protect the environment • coordinate Year 2000 efforts to ensure NSDOE's ability to function effectively after 2000
Government- Wide Goal: Social Responsibility		
Departmental Goal #2 Improve the level of environmental management.	• set standards and address specific issues to promote sustainable management of Nova Scotia's environment and its resources	• increased solid waste diversion from 7% to 31% from 1995-1998. • published the first State of the Environment Report
Departmental Goal #3 Promote stewardship of the environment.	• partner with individuals, private sector, industry and communities to encourage a mutual and shared responsibility for NS's environment	• coordinate the NS Youth Conservation Corps, which engages youth in community-based stewardship projects • work with industry, gov't and business associations to develop pollution prevention plans

Government- Wide Goal: Economic Growth		
Departmental Goal #4 Support innovative approaches to achieving sustainable development.	• encourage creative alternatives to environmental management (ie. pollution prevention, environmental management systems and environmental education), while promoting environmental industries as a proven economic opportunity for NS	• 7300 people were employed in the NS environmental industry in 1998 • coordinated the NS Youth Conservation Corps, which created employment opportunities for youth

4.0 Core Business Functions

The Business Plan focuses on the Department's major new efforts, yet the core business functions also require recognition. The core business functions are day-to-day activities that directly serve the legislated mandate of the Department and further government-wide and departmental goals. The core business functions are monitoring and enforcement, education/public participation, harmonizing approaches, and stewardship/innovation.

- **Monitoring and Enforcement:** In order to maintain a healthy and safe environment for Nova Scotians, the Department's core responsibility is to enforce its legislation and inspect, permit and investigate activities with potential environmental impacts.

- **Education/Public Participation:** The Department develops and delivers programs promoting and educating the public to ensure client awareness of regulatory responsibilities and departmental initiatives. It also emphasizes providing broad access to information, and holding broad based public consultations. For example, the Department routinely conducts a 30 day public review of all new regulations, substantial amendments to regulations, and major policies. In addition, the Department will undertake a public review of the Environment Actduring 1999/2000.

- **Harmonizing Approaches:** Recognizing that pollution respects no boundaries, the Department works to establish environmental standards and participate in cooperative environmental protection initiatives. For example, working with other Canadian provinces and territories, the Department set a target and subsequently met its commitments to reduce acid precipitation (reduced sulphate deposition from 20kg/hectare in 1970's to approximately 10kg/hectare in the 1990's).

- **Stewardship/Innovation:** Through support for environmental

stewardship activities, communities, industries and individuals share responsibility for the care and proper use of the environment. By supporting the development of environmental solutions, the Department is committed to protecting and enhancing the environment as well as supporting economic development. For example, the Department assisted three municipal units in developing and implementing water treatment plants to provide potable water for residents through the use of cost-effective Nova Scotia based environmental technologies.

5.0 Priorities for 1999/2000

Government-Wide Goals: Responsive Government and Fiscal Responsibility

Departmental Goal: To improve the Department's ability to protect the environment through the enforcement of its legislation and complementary activities relating to staff training, teamwork, the application of appropriate technology, and education and public participation

Legislative Review
The *Environment Act* requires the Department to undertake a five (5) year, comprehensive review of the legislative framework. The review will include public consultation. To meet the legislative requirements, the following is planned:

- officially launch the Legislative Review in the fall of 1999;
- establish an Advisory Committee in the fall of 1999; and
- complete the Advisory Committee's public review with a report and recommendations to the Minister by the spring of 2000.

This activity will serve to assess, update and implement improvements in the *Environment Act* to better serve the public and protect the environment.

Year 2000
The Department, like all others in the Provincial Government, has been undertaking activities for Year 2000 compliance in an effort to ensure the Department's ability to function effectively after 2000.

Information Technology
The Department is developing an integrated environmental information management system (EIMAS). Enhanced data retrieval and improved analysis capabilities will aid staff decision making. Due to the considerable task at hand, the Department has invested considerable effort developing the EIMAS system. 1999/2000 signifies the initial implementation of the system in the regional offices.

Specific EIMAS initiatives include:

- rolling out EIMAS in one of the Department's regional offices by Spring 1999; and,
- providing technical training and ongoing system integration as

EIMAS is implemented in the remaining regional offices by October, 1999.

Government-Wide Goal: Social Responsibility

Departmental Goal: Improve the level of environmental management

State of the Environment Reporting Program
Nova Scotia's first State of the Environment (SOE) report was released in July, 1998. The SOE report was well received as an educational tool to raise awareness of major environmental issues and to identify environmental trends. The report is an important catalyst for "grass roots" actions by community groups and industry organizations.

Key activities for SOE include:

- publishing the second SOE report before the end of 1999, focusing on land and living creatures, with special reference to community-based resource management; and
- defining ambient monitoring priorities and identifying resources required to support monitoring networks.

Corporate Linkages:

NS Dept. of Natural Resources
NS Dept. of Housing & Municipal Affairs
NS Dept. of Fisheries & Aquaculture
NS Dept. of Health
NS Museum
Environment Canada
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Solid Waste-Resource Management Strategy
By the year 2000, the Province will divert the amount of solid waste going to the landfill by 50% from 1995 levels. By achieving this objective, Nova Scotians will benefit from both improved environmental protection, and increased opportunities for employment. Since 1995, over 450 jobs were created through the establishment of 92 Enviro-Depots, and more than 1440 Nova Scotians were employed by companies that turn waste into valuable resources.

The Province is close to achieving its 50% diversion goal. During 1997-98 Nova Scotia achieved 35% solid waste diversion, with 90% of all Nova Scotians having access to curbside recycling programs. Composting programs currently divert 20,000 tonnes of organics, annually, and that number should triple with additional municipal solid waste programs coming on-stream in 1999/2000.

Specific solid waste management priorities for 1999/2000 include:

- supporting the completion of composting facilities in the

Municipality of Cumberland by spring 1999;

- supporting the completion of composting facilities in the Western Region, Annapolis Valley, and Pictou by summer 1999;
- supporting the establishment of recycling programs in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality and the Town of Truro by summer 1999; and
- facilitating industry stewardship agreements to increase the level of responsibility assumed by industry for the post-industrial and post-consumer fate of goods and materials such as waste paint and newsprint.

Corporate Linkages:

NS Dept. of Housing & Municipal Affairs
NS Dept. of Transporation & Public Works
Municipalities
Resource Recovery Fund Board
Clean Nova Scotia
Various Environmental Organizations
Various Industry Organizations

Departmental Goal: Promote stewardship of the environment.

Water Resource Management
It is now widely recognized that water resources play a vital role in the social and economic fabric of the Province. For example: beaches closed to swimming and shellfish harvesting due to bacteria contamination negatively impact both quality of life and the local economy; clean water to irrigate farm land is essential in support of our agricultural sector.

Communities have clearly communicated that the protection, restoration and appropriate allocation of water resources are priorities. Education, awareness, and planning are important, and improved coordination among communities, industry and government is vital to reach these goals.

During 1999, NSDOE plans to pilot two initiatives, one in the Bras d'Or focusing on water resource management, and the other in the Annapolis Valley focusing on resource assessment. The pilots will allow the Department to test the concepts proposed in the Water Resource Management Strategy. Specifically, they will:

- focus on the use of innovative environmental technologies to solve water-related environmental issues (i.e. sewage treatment, water conservation);
- support community water resource management through stewardship projects engaging the Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corps and various local stakeholders (i.e.

education and awareness initiatives, stream enhancement projects, community monitoring programs);

- support community decision making and priority setting for water resource allocation;

- implement administration fees to fund a stewardship board.

Corporate Linkages:

NS Dept. of Natural Resources
NS Dept. of Agriculture & Marketing
NS Dept. of Housing & Municipal Affairs
NS Dept. of Fisheries and Aquaculture
NS Dept. of Economic Development and Tourism
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Environment Canada

Wastewater Strategy
In support of water resource management, reducing the number of communities that directly discharge raw sewage into coastal waters is a priority. The negative impact on surrounding areas limits the recreational, domestic and industrial uses of these waters. In Nova Scotia 45% of the population is served by on-site systems. To prevent environmental contamination of the water resource these on-site systems must be properly maintained.

The first step toward proper wastewater management will be the development of a draft discussion paper for public review and comment. The results of the discussion paper will form the basis of a wastewater strategy that will outline the issues, examine new technologies, propose options, define potential roles and identify partnerships.

Specific initiatives supporting the strategy include:

- publicly releasing the wastewater discussion paper, which will examine cost- effective solutions to significant problems while supporting the development of environmental technologies, in spring 1999;

- receiving public input on the discussion paper through a public consultation process;

- completing the wastewater strategy by summer 1999; and

- participating in the Department's pilot projects on water resource management, with an emphasis on wastewater.

Corporate Linkages:

NS Dept. of Housing and Municipal Affairs
Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities

Protected Areas
In 1998 responsibility for protected areas was transferred to the Department of the Environment. These responsibilities include wilderness areas, nature reserves, heritage rivers and the inventory and evaluation of significant natural areas. Although NSDOE maintains primary responsibility for these sites, their management will be shared and will draw on resources from both the Department of the Environment and the Department of Natural Resources.

Specific initiatives to support natural and protected areas include:

- identifying management planning priorities and addressing the highest priority site protection requirements;
- liaising with local communities and stakeholder groups to provide information about the implications of wilderness areas, identify areas of interest or concern, and encourage partnerships;
- creating an inventory of ecological values and existing recreational uses and impacts to support management planning and site protection initiatives;
- protecting unique, rare and outstanding natural values by encouraging private land stewardship;
- continuing water quality monitoring for the Shelburne Canadian Heritage River; and
- developing and evaluating an inventory of significant sites of natural value, and recommending protection requirements to guide Protected Areas planning and support integrated resource management of Crown and other lands.

Corporate Linkages:

NS Dept. of Natural Resources
NS Dept. of Economic Development & Tourism
NS Dept. of Education (NS Museum)
Sport and Recreation Commission
ACOA
Various Community Organizations

Pollution Prevention
Pollution Prevention promotes the use of processes, practices or products that avoid or minimize the creation of pollutants and wastes at the source. It focuses on promoting proactive prevention measures rather than imposing reactionary controls and prescriptive regulations. Pollution prevention fosters sustainable development by simultaneously enhancing environmental protection and economic opportunity. Decreased consumption of non-renewable resources combined with reduced releases of wastes have tangible environmental benefits. Incremental improvements in production efficiency and reduced operating costs achieved through enhanced energy utilization and decreased need for pollution control measures directly augment

economic advantages.

A Pollution Prevention Discussion Paper was released in May, 1997 and widely distributed to potential stakeholders. Building on comments received on this document, a Pollution Prevention Implementation Plan was launched in July, 1998. The Plan presents a foundation for the establishment of a program and objectives to promote pollution prevention in Nova Scotia.

Specific initiatives to promote pollution prevention include:

- reviewing pilot projects and developing an Environmental Management System for the Department of Transportation and Public Works;
- developing pollution prevention programs at Cape Breton regional health care facilities in partnership with ACAP Cape Breton and EcoAction 2000;
- developing a pollution prevention MOU with the Nova Scotia Dental Association;
- developing an MOU with Nova Scotia Power Inc. focusing on the management of mercury and energy efficient lighting.

Government-Wide Goal: Economic Growth

Departmental Goal: Support innovative approaches to achieving sustainable development.

Environmental Industries and Technologies
The promotion of environmental industries and innovative environmental technologies has resulted in cost-effective environmental management and jobs for Nova Scotians. By facilitating economic development through the commercialization of innovative Nova Scotian technologies, a number of local environmental problems have been addressed.

Over 7300 people were employed in the Nova Scotia environmental sector in 1998.

Nova Scotia is gaining international recognition in areas such as wastewater treatment and solid waste management. By capitalizing on similar island topography, historical trade ties, similar laws and language, the Department is facilitating increased export of products and services in the Caribbean basin. Additionally, through trade missions and association linkages, the Department is facilitating product manufacturing and entry into the European Union through Sweden.

To facilitate economic growth, increased employment and enhanced export opportunities in the environmental sector, key activities will include:

- facilitating the creation of private sector positions in the environmental sector focusing on wastewater technologies, solid waste management, and soil remediation;

- supporting business development and product commercialization by researching environmental trends, assessing new technologies that relate to areas such as solid waste and wastewater treatment, facilitating business contacts and providing demonstration sites to display the technology;

- increasing Nova Scotia export potential for environmental consultants and businesses by assisting companies with international contracts and financial assistance;

- developing export opportunities through the coordination of exchanges, trade missions and other business activities focussing on areas such as wastewater treatment and solid waste management; and

- assisting in the implementation of the Department's pilots on water resource management and the wastewater strategy by addressing community concerns, such as a lack of potable water and wastewater management, through the use of innovative environmental technologies.

Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corps
The Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corps (NSYCC) creates summer jobs for youth through involvement in 2 international exchanges and over 40 community environmental projects. NSYCC promotes community initiatives through projects designed to preserve or enhance the environment. Youth gain leadership skills and environmental awareness by providing, for example, environmental education in communities, and by participating in and leading environmental projects in these same communities.

Specific initiatives for 1999/2000 include:

- creating job opportunities for youth that, through their participation in community projects (i.e. waterways rehabilitation, interpretive trail development), teach leadership and teamwork skills, as well as building awareness for local environment concerns;

- supporting youth entrepreneurship through the acceptance of youth proposals to conduct environmental research or monitoring activities; and

- supporting youth development through participation in cross-cultural exchanges that expose youth to rainforest, biodiversity, and community development issues.

6.0 Budgetary Context
Over the past six years, the Department has extensively reviewed its programs and services to make them more effective, and to align them with government-wide priorities. Starting in 1993, the Department

coordinated an extensive public review of the legislative framework. This public review culminated in the proclamation of a new Environment Act in 1995. Following this, the Department completed a strategic plan and carried out a detailed review of programs. The strategic plan and program review guided a thorough review of all regulations and supporting policies, resulting in a consolidation of programs and the introduction of new innovative programs (eg. State of the Environment Reporting and the Environmental Industries and Technologies Division).

For fiscal year 1998/99, NSDOE's total budget is $15,678,000. This budget will be allocated to the four core business functions as follows:

Monitoring/Enforcement
NSDOE regulates and monitors activities that potentially impact the environment. To support its environmental monitoring and enforcement responsibilities, the Department issues approvals, conducts on-going environmental effects monitoring and, when warranted, takes enforcement action. These activities will account for over 62% of the Department's expenditures.

Education/Public Participation
Informing the public about significant environmental issues and encouraging public participation in decision making are key departmental priorities. These priorities are addressed using a range of measures. Some examples of how the Department solicits public involvement include:

- a 30-day public consultation for amended regulations and all major policies;
- comprehensive environmental assessment and public hearings for major industrial developments; and
- the establishment of community liaison committees.

During 1999/2000, the Department will also be undertaking a public review of the *Environment Act*. In total, the departmental expenditure for education and public participation will be approximately 16% of the total budget.

Harmonizing Approaches
Recognizing that pollution respects no boundaries, the Department works to establish environmental standards and participate in cooperative protection initiatives. In the coming year, the Department will spend roughly 7% of its budget on harmonizing environmental standards and measures.

Stewardship/Innovation
Program innovation involves making polluters responsible for the pollution they create - the "polluter pays" principle. This is the driving principle behind the Department's move to encourage every Nova Scotian to participate in recycling programs and requiring industries to self-monitor effluents. In other instances, communities demand stewardship responsibilities, as is the case for the water and sewage strategies. As the basic approaches change, innovation is required. This was recognized when the Department launched its environmental industries program, proving that economic development and

environmental protection readily co-exist. In total, the Department will spend about 10% of its budget on stewardship and innovation.

Protected Areas
This program supports resource evaluation, planning, public consultations and partnership negotiations regarding protected areas and ecological reserves. Five percent of the Department's budget will be expended on these activities.

7.0 Outcomes and Outcome Measures

Goal: Improving the Level of Environmental Protection and Management

Outcome: Creating Safe Environments

Indicator: Clean Water, Air, Land

Measure: % of municipal water supplies meeting Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines for total coliform

Year	1998 (baseline)	1999	2000
Targets		100%	100%
Reported Data	88%		

Comments: A target of 100% was chosen because of the potential human health risks associated with coliform bacteria.

Outcome: Creating Safe Environments

Indicator: Clean Water, Air, Land

Measure: % of the Nova Scotia population served by treated sewage

Year	1990	1996 (baseline)	1997	1998	2000
Targets					establish targets
Reported Data	59%	69%			

Comments: The Department's sewage discharge strategy is currently under development. Targets will be established in 2000

Outcome: Creating Safe Environments

Indicator: Clean Air, Water, Land

Measure: % of home owners maintaining their septic systems

Year	1997 (baseline)	1998	1999	2000
Targets				90%
Reported Data	54%	non-reporting year	non-reporting year	

Comments: Based on recommended tank pumping every 2-5 years. NSDOE will improve system and tank maintenance through education and awareness programs.

Outcome: Creating Safe Environments

Indicator: Clean Air, Water, Land

Measure: Number of days per year that the Time Air Quality Index meets the good / excellent level in Metro Halifax

Year	1998 (baseline)	1999	2000
Targets		339	339
Reported Data	324		

Comments: This measure uses the nationally recognized pollutant index scale to monitor urban air quality. This measure is also affected by transboundary pollutants originating outside the urban core.

Outcome: Creating Safe Environments

Indicator: Private-public-community partnerships in pollution prevention

Measure: Number of pollution prevention partnerships in place

Year	1997 (baseline)	1998	1999	2000
Targets			4	6

Reported Data	0	1		

Comments: This is a voluntary approach to reducing pollution. This approach requires comprehensive planning, resulting in gradual roll-out.

Outcome: Preservation of Ecosystem Diversity

Indicator: Protection of Crown Land Natural Areas

Measure: Land dedicated to parks and protected areas ('000 ha)

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997	2005
Targets					to be determined
Reported Data	161	448	448	453	

Comments: This relates to Government's commitment to protect significant natural areas for future generations.

Outcome: Preservation of Ecosystem Diversity

Indicator: Protection of Crown Land Natural Areas

Measure: Number of identified landscape types represented within parks and protected areas

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997	2005
Targets					to be determined
Reported Data	7	26	26	26	

Comments: This applies to the protection of representative landscapes in parks and protected areas.

Goal: Social Responsibility - Promote Stewardship of the Environment

Outcome: Securing Our Future

Indicator: Quality of the Environment

Measure: % of population involved in selected recycling programs

% of containers returned

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000
Target		80%	80%	80%

% total waste diverted from disposal

Year	1999	2000
Target	40%	50%

Outcome: Increasing Individual and Community Involvement in Environmental Protection

Indicator: Community Involvement

Measure: % of waterways and coastal inlets under active community stewardship

Year	1998 (baseline)	1999	2000	2001
Target		22%	24%	26%
Reported Data	20%			

Comments: a 2% increase means that 5 more watersheds were under active community stewardship.

Goal: Support Innovative Approaches to Achieving Sustainable Development

Outcome: Improve Private Sector Participation in Environmental Management

Indicator: Private Sector Involvement in Environmental Management

Measure: Total Number employed in environmental services and products, academia, and non-government organizations

Year	1995 (baseline)	1999	2000
Targets		5800	6100

Reported Data	2500

Comments: Departmental initiatives will assist in the creation of jobs in water, wastewater, soil remediation, solid waste management, etc.

8.0 Communications
The Communications goals for the Department of the Environment focus on providing employees and the public with the information they need to understand everything from environmental regulations and guidelines, to the various business development opportunities offered Nova Scotians.

There is a broad diversity of expertise within the Department. For this reason, it is vital to share information on new initiatives and programs with employees in a timely manner. Having an informed group internally can assist the Department in disseminating our external messages with consistency.

The Nova Scotia Department of the Environment is a regulating body, the enforcers for the protection and preservation of the environment. But beyond this, DOE offers opportunity. Through our various divisions we not only study environmental issues, but offer opportunities for Nova Scotians to develop technologies and business practices which promise positive environmental results.

Our messages, both internally and externally, reflect our approach to fulfilling this diverse mandate. First, as "keepers of the environment", DOE must demonstrate its concern for the preservation, sustainability and enhancement of the Nova Scotia environment. This is a message we foster in the way we do business, at all levels. This message is as important in the "living of it" as it is in the "telling of it".

Forging partnerships with people, communities, business and industry to promote good environmental practices and awareness is another important message. Increasingly, stewardship is a most important vehicle for environmental management and protection. We want to empower people, and give them the tools to help them effectively participate in keeping Nova Scotia's environment clean, safe, and protected for future generations. To accomplish this, we need inclusive, cooperative partnerships involving stakeholders willing to work together for the environment. We support this by offering expertise that will guide and establish parameters for these groups. This also provides citizens with a voice to government. Through consultation, and by offering opportunities for Nova Scotians to participate in the process of setting those guidelines and controls, we empower our audiences.

Finally, proaction and prevention is the underlying theme of our communication approach. Harkening back to the original message highlighting our concern as overseers of the environment, promoting proactiveness as key in achieving our goals is essential. This means putting ourselves under the microscope to see where we can do better. Already we are demonstrating our willingness to do this. In July 1998, DOE released its first State of the Environment Report, and announced a rigorous reporting schedule over the next number of years. This is one measurement which allows us to celebrate our successes, as well as acknowledge our weaknesses. By doing this however, we can set

meaningful goals and work with business, industry, communities and individuals to establish reasonable expectations and time frames for improvement. Our communication effort is largely about fostering an understanding among all Nova Scotians that they have a stake in preserving and protecting the environment. The Department of the Environment will provide enforcement to protect this most important resource, but will also provide guidance to all Nova Scotians who are willing to do their part to ensure Nova Scotia's environmental future.

9.0 Highlights from Human Resources
The Human Resources Division of the CSU provides training and consultative services to support government-wide and departmental priorities. CSU support for government- wide priorities in 1999/2000 includes the Integrated Management Processes (IMD) initiative, Occupational Health and Safety training, and the implementation of programs to reduce sick leave and increase attendance. Priority actions for 1999/2000 include the following:

- Support the Corporate IMD initiative by coordinating the performance management and succession planning processes within the Department. This provides NSDOE managers with relevant training and consultative support to assist the evaluation of staff positions. The CSU will also provide analytical/ planning support to departmental Counsel.

- Provide support to managers responsible for implementing the OH&S program by establishing performance targets [Workers Compensation Board (WCB), Long-Term Disability (LTD), and Short-Term Illness (STI)], coordinating reporting within the Department, and providing consultative services, as required.

- Provide consultative services to NSDOE with respect to Disability Management and Workplace Rehabilitation, including STI, WCB, and LTD.

- Implement an evaluation process for the corporate Attendance Management policy within the Department.

10.0 Highlights from Information Technology
The Information Technology Section of the CSU provides network, desktop and computer system development services to support the core business functions of the Department of the Environment within government-wide standards and regulations for Information Technology. This will be accomplished in 1999/2000 by the following initiatives:

- Implement a Year 2000 team to address the issues surrounding the computer problems associated with the year 2000. The goal of this project is to ensure that information systems utilized, and critical for delivering the Department's business, are operational following January 1, 2000. The Year 2000 project will be delivered over a 21 month period beginning in June 1998 and proceeding through March 2000.

- Complete the development of the Department's integrated environmental information management system (EIMAS),

scheduled for spring 1999. Enhanced data retrieval and improved analysis capabilities will aid staff decision making.

- Roll out EIMAS in the Department's Sydney regional office by spring 1999.

- Provide ongoing technical support and training as EIMAS is implemented in the remaining regional offices throughout the remainder of 1999.

11.0 Highlights from Financial Services
The Finance Division of the Resources CSU provides revenue collection and accounts receivable maintenance for the Department of the Environment. It conducts needs assessments and provides financial analysis and consulting services to address both government-wide and department-specific initiatives. A priority action for 1999/2000 is to ensure that the Department maximizes its revenue generation by minimizing the volume of delinquent accounts receivables. Specific actions for 1999/2000 include:

Government-Wide Initiatives

- implementing a Tangible Capital Asset Policy to modify the manner in which government accounts for tangible capital assets;

- developing and implementing a policy for the use of debit and credit cards in government offices providing goods and services to the general public to improve public access for the purchase of government goods and services;

- establishing a central billing system for services provided by central agencies to client departments to provide consistent, accurate and timely internal billings within government;

- implementing a Taxable Benefits Policy to provide guidance for the consistent application of Revenue Canada Taxation rules and regulations for taxable benefits and the issuance of T4A's;

Department-Specific Initiatives

- analyzing options for the collection of revenue and maintaining accounts receivable to ensure the most cost efficient and Y2K compliant option is chosen to provide the Department with effective funds management. The new revenue/receivable system will be operational the summer of 1999.

For more infomation contact:

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